<u>Trend Study 9-16-00</u>

Study site name: Mosby Mountain. Range type: Big Sagebrush-Grass.

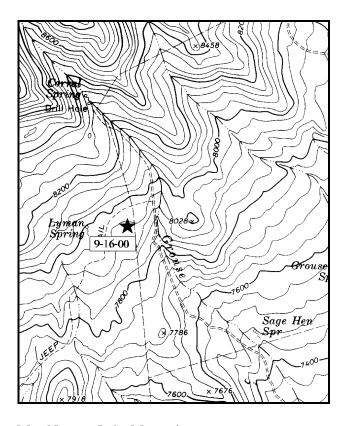
Compass bearing: frequency baseline 155°M.

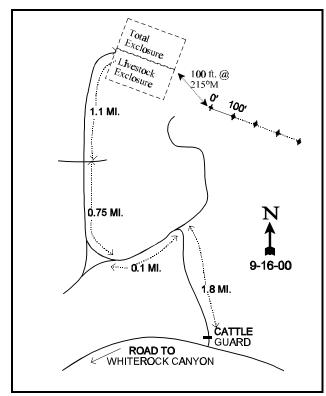
First frame placement on frequency belts <u>5</u> feet. Frequency belt placement; line 1 (11 & 96ft), line 2 (30ft), line 3 (50ft), line 4 (72ft).

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

From the town of Whiterocks, go east for approximately 1.75 miles to a "T" in the road. Turn left (north) and go 3.5 miles to an intersection where 2 roads fork off to the right Turn right then take the left fork. Head north for approximately 4.0 miles to the Mosby Mountain Exclosure. The 0-foot baseline stake is located 12 paces from the southwest corner of the big game exclosure bearing 210°M.

This site may also be accessed from the east by traveling north through Tridell on 8000 E. Go though the reservation then west to Mosby Mountain.





Map Name: <u>Lake Mountain</u>

Township <u>3S</u>, Range <u>18E</u>, Section <u>14</u>

Diagrammatic Sketch

UTM 4490403.305 N, 595962.705 E

DISCUSSION

Trend Study No. 9-16 (12-5)

The Mosby Mountain study samples a sagebrush-grass type with scattered serviceberry and bitterbrush at an elevation of about 7,900 feet. Slope varies from 8-10% and a southerly aspect. The relatively high elevation may limit or prohibit big game use during severe winters. The study site is in close proximity to the Mosby Mountain big game exclosure and pellet group transect. Soon after the reading of this study in August 1988, the area was burned by a wildfire. During the 1995 reading, it was noted that belts 1 and 5 from the original baseline were not burned while belts 2, 3, and 4 were burned. As a result, most of the shrubs on the burned belts were eliminated. Past and present cattle use is heavy with cattle still on the site during the 1995 and 2000 readings. Pellet group transect data taken along the baseline in 2000 estimate light use by big game and slightly higher use by livestock. Deer use was estimated at 9 days use/acre (22 ddu/ha) and elk use was estimated at 20 days use/acre (50 edu/ha). Livestock use was estimated at 36 days use/acre (89 cdu/ha).

Soil on the site is relatively shallow and rocky with deeper soil further down slope. Effective rooting depth is estimated at just over 9 inches. Soils are loam to sandy clay loam in texture and are fairly high in organic matter (4.5%). Soil reactivity is slightly acidic (pH of 6.4). On nearby steeper slopes, noticeable soil movement was reported in 1988. Bare ground is moderate at about 21% in 2000, but abundant herbaceous vegetation and litter cover keep erosion at minimal levels.

Browse on the site are scattered and accounted for an estimated 8% average cover in 1995, increasing to 11% by 2000. The most abundant shrub in both cover and density is mountain big sagebrush. Density has varied between readings for several reasons, including the burn following the 1988 reading, and the much larger sample size utilized for the northeast region beginning in 1995. The 1988 burn was spotty over the study site with many sagebrush surviving. Mountain big sagebrush density is currently ('00) estimated at 1,900 plants/acre with light to moderate use and mostly good vigor. Percent decadency increased from 8% in 1995 to 14% in 2000. Recruitment is good at 12% (220 plants/acre). It appears to be adequate to replace the decadent plants classified as dying in the population (80 plants/acre).

Secondary browse species consist of serviceberry and bitterbrush. Total density of serviceberry declined from 1,265 plants/acre in 1988 to 400 by 2000, while bitterbrush declined from about 600 plants/acre in 1988 to 300 in 2000. Changes in density could be due to the burn or the increased sample size used beginning in 1995, or possibly both. Serviceberry shows moderate to heavy use in all readings. Currently ('00), 50% of the serviceberry display moderate use, with an additional 25% showing heavy use. No decadent plants were sampled in 2000, and vigor is good. A positive trend for serviceberry is the high level of recruitment in 2000 at 20%. Bitterbrush display moderate use on 60% of the population and heavy use on 27% of the population in 2000. Vigor is also good throughout the bitterbrush population with no decadent plants sampled in 2000. Bitterbrush on the site have a prostrate growth form and currently average 1 foot in height with a 3½ foot crown. When the site was read in 2000, it was noted that some shrubs of different species have been heavily browsed to the ground. As deer and elk pellet groups are not abundant, this is probably due to cattle use especially during the extended drought during the past decade.

The herbaceous understory is quite diverse and accounts for 75% of the total vegetative cover on the site. Grasses provided about 17% cover in 1995, half of which came from thickspike wheatgrass. In 2000, cover from grasses increased to almost 23%, with thickspike again providing half of this. Nested frequency of thickspike significantly decreased in 2000. Mutton bluegrass is also abundant providing nearly 5% average cover in 2000 and significantly increasing in nested frequency. Other perennial species include: Kentucky bluegrass, Sandberg bluegrass, needle-and-thread, squirreltail and Letterman needlegrass. Some grasses had been heavily utilized when the site was read in 2000. As a group, perennial grasses slightly decreased in sum of

nested frequency in 2000. Cheatgrass, which was moderately abundant in 1995, was not sampled in 2000 due to drought. Forbs are diverse and provide over 11% average cover in 2000. Although average forb cover increased in 2000, sum of nested frequency for perennial species decreased. Annual forbs were abundant in 1995 with the wet spring of that year, but nearly disappeared from the site in 2000 with drought. Many of the forb species are weedy increasers. The most common perennial species include: hooker balsamroot, trailing fleabane, pussytoes and aster.

1982 APPARENT TREND ASSESSMENT

Within the immediate area of the study site, soil trend appears stable to declining. On nearby steeper sites, the trend would be more downward. Vegetative condition is below optimum. Browse density, especially of the more preferred species, is substandard. Animal use is almost certainly one of the more causative factors. Many increaser species of all vegetative classes are present and may be expanding. Range trend appears to be slightly downward.

1988 TREND ASSESSMENT

The soil trend appears fairly stable. Percent bare ground increased slightly, while percent litter cover declined. However, basal vegetative cover increased from 7% to 13%. Mountain big sagebrush has increased in density due to a significant increase in the number of seedlings and young plants. Percent decadence increased from 5% to 28%, but vigor is generally good. The majority of the sagebrush is lightly hedged so this increase in decadency is more a reflection of the age of the stand in conjunction with drought. The more preferred serviceberry and bitterbrush show improved recruitment, but serviceberry displays heavy use on 100% of the mature plants with an increased rate of decadency. Overall trend for browse is stable. Trend for the herbaceous understory is significantly improved. Quadrat frequency of grasses and forbs nearly doubled since 1982. Quadrat frequency of thickspike wheatgrass and mutton grass increased from 52% and 53% respectively to 92% and 95%.

TREND ASSESSMENT

soil - stable (3)

browse - stable for key species with improved recruitment (3)

herbaceous understory - up (5)

1995 TREND ASSESSMENT

Trend for soil is slightly up with a good stand of rhizomatous grasses to help prevent erosion. The fire that burned the site in 1988 reduced the density of the shrubs, but did not eliminate them. The remaining stand of mountain big sagebrush and serviceberry, though smaller, are healthier with less decadence. Use is still heavy yet vigor is good. Trend is stable. Trend for the herbaceous understory is slightly down. Sum nested frequency of perennial grasses and perennial forbs has declined since 1988.

TREND ASSESSMENT

soil - slightly up (4)

browse - stable for key species (3)

herbaceous understory - slightly down for perennial species (2)

2000 TREND ASSESSMENT

Trend for soil is slightly up. Erosion remains minimal as herbaceous vegetation is abundant. The ratio of protective ground cover (vegetation, litter, and cryptogams) to bare soil increased from 2.7:1 to 3.3:1 in 2000.

This ratio indicates high nested frequency values for vegetation and litter and well disbursed protective ground cover over the site. Trend for browse is stable. Mountain big sagebrush has good recruitment at 12%, mostly good vigor and moderate decadence at 14%. Use is light to moderate. Serviceberry have high recruitment at 20%, no decadency and good vigor. Bitterbrush displays good vigor and no decadence. Use is moderate to heavy on both serviceberry and bitterbrush. However, these species can tolerate higher levels of use and don't appear to be negatively affected at the present time. Trend for the herbaceous understory is slightly down as sum of nested frequency for both perennial grasses and forbs slightly decreased in 2000.

TREND ASSESSMENT

<u>soil</u> - slightly up (4)<u>browse</u> - stable (3)herbaceous <u>understory</u> - slightly down (2)

HERBACEOUS TRENDS --Herd unit 09, Study no: 16

T y p	Species	Nested	Freque	ncy	Quadra	ıt Frequ	ency		Average Cover %	
e		'88	'95	'00'	'82	'88	'95	'00'	'95	'00
G	Agropyron dasystachyum	_b 260	_b 266	_a 211	52	92	85	68	8.28	11.19
G	Bromus tectorum (a)	-	_b 115	a ⁻	-	-	37	-	1.28	-
G	Poa fendleriana	_c 277	_a 149	_b 200	53	95	59	66	2.87	4.78
G	Poa pratensis	_a 4	_c 105	_b 42	-	2	39	15	1.05	1.29
G	Poa secunda	_b 182	_a 33	_a 30	53	72	13	14	.31	.58
G	Sitanion hystrix	_a 16	_a 19	_b 58	6	10	9	23	.09	1.87
G	Stipa comata	_a 21	_a 63	ь70	2	12	27	27	1.77	2.75
G	Stipa lettermani	_b 53	_b 58	_a 7	20	22	24	3	.84	.30
T	otal for Annual Grasses	0	115	0	0	0	37	0	1.28	0
Т	otal for Perennial Grasses	813	693	618	186	305	256	216	15.22	22.78
Т	otal for Grasses	813	808	618	186	305	293	216	16.51	22.78
F	Agoseris glauca	-	3	-	4	-	1	-	.00	-
F	Allium spp.	_a 3	ь60	a ⁻	5	2	30	-	.15	-
F	Antennaria rosea	_b 61	_a 31	_{ab} 56	10	26	12	22	.93	3.15
F	Arabis spp.	_c 60	_b 12	a-	5	32	6	1	.03	-
F	Artemisia ludoviciana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.00
F	Astragalus purshii	_c 28	_b 7	a ⁻	6	9	3	-	.06	-
F	Aster spp.	68	65	75	34	26	29	30	.95	1.70
F	Astragalus spp.	19	2	3	1	6	1	2	.00	.01
F	Balsamorhiza hookeri	_c 157	_b 104	_a 60	24	69	45	28	1.15	2.28
F	Camelina microcarpa (a)	-	_b 7	a ⁻	-	-	4	-	.02	-
F	Calochortus nuttallii	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
F	Collomia linearis (a)	_	_b 75	a ⁻	_	-	33	-	.24	_

T y p	Species	Nested	Freque	ncy	Quadra	ıt Frequ	ency		Average Cover %	
e		'88	'95	'00	'82	'88	'95	'00	'95	'00
F	Comandra pallida	-	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	.15
F	Collinsia parviflora (a)	-	_b 60	_a 9	-	-	25	4	.27	.02
F	Crepis acuminata	a ⁻	_b 18	a ⁻	-	-	9	-	.07	-
F	Cryptantha spp.	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	.00	-
F	Cymopterus spp.	-	3	3	-	-	1	1	.00	.00
F	Descurainia pinnata (a)	_b 23	_b 27	_a 2	-	11	15	1	.10	.00
F	Eriogonum alatum	_b 122	_a 3	_a 11	4	47	3	4	.01	.24
F	Erigeron flagellaris	_a 19	_a 30	_b 92	11	9	13	38	.09	2.88
F	Eriogonum umbellatum	ь6	ab 1	a ⁻	4	4	1	1	.03	-
F	Heterotheca villosa	a ⁻	ь13	ь12	-	-	6	7	.20	.16
F	Lappula occidentalis (a)	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	.00	-
F	Lactuca serriola	a ⁻	_b 5	a ⁻	-	1	3	-	.01	-
F	Lepidium densiflorum (a)	-	_b 92	a ⁻	-	1	45	-	.25	-
F	Lithospermum ruderale	8	15	7	-	4	8	5	.41	.08
F	Lupinus argenteus	_{ab} 17	_a 3	_b 23	8	9	2	11	.06	.35
F	Microsteris gracilis (a)	-	4	-	1	-	2	1	.01	-
F	Penstemon spp.	15	8	9	3	10	3	5	.01	.10
F	Phlox longifolia	_b 24	_{ab} 16	_a 2	-	11	7	1	.03	.00
F	Polygonum douglasii (a)	-	ь177	_a 4	15	_	65	1	1.08	.00
F	Potentilla gracilis	-	1	2	-	-	1	1	.00	.15
F	Sedum lanceolatum	5	1	-	1	2	1	-	.00	-
F	Senecio multilobatus	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	.00
F	Sphaeralcea coccinea	_{ab} 13	_b 19	_a 3	8	6	8	2	.11	.06
F	Taraxacum officinale	a ⁻	_c 28	_b 6	-	-	13	3	.16	.06
F	Tragopogon dubius	10	6	5	-	8	3	3	.04	.04
T	otal for Annual Forbs	23	443	15	15	11	190	6	1.98	0.02
T	otal for Perennial Forbs	638	455	373	128	281	210	166	4.59	11.47
T	otal for Forbs	661	898	388	143	292	400	172	6.57	11.50

Values with different subscript letters are significantly different at % = 0.10

BROWSE TRENDS --

Herd unit 09, Study no: 16

T y	Species	Strip Frequer	ncy	Average Cover %	
p e		'95	'00'	'95	'00'
В	Amelanchier alnifolia	22	19	1.81	2.75
В	Artemisia tridentata vaseyana	41	43	3.40	4.54
В	Ceanothus fendleri	7	7	1.92	2.12
В	Chrysothamnus nauseosus graveolens	0	1	-	1
В	Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus lanceolatus	4	3	.18	.03
В	Eriogonum heracleoides	12	6	.56	.30
В	Gutierrezia sarothrae	3	7	-	.15
В	Opuntia spp.	6	5	-	.03
В	Purshia tridentata	10	12	.03	1.00
В	Symphoricarpos oreophilus	6	6	.06	.15
Т	otal for Browse	111	109	7.98	11.09

BASIC COVER --

Herd unit 09, Study no: 16

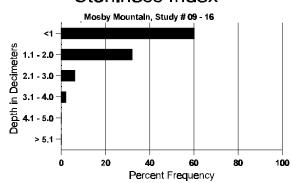
Cover Type	Nested Frequen	су	Average	Cover %)	
	'95	'00	'82	'88	'95	'00
Vegetation	369	365	7.00	13.00	39.93	49.49
Rock	193	102	.25	2.50	6.85	7.48
Pavement	94	60	.50	1.00	.23	.60
Litter	395	392	72.00	56.50	49.51	50.47
Cryptogams	2	23	.75	5.25	.00	.46
Bare Ground	282	234	19.50	21.75	14.68	20.87

SOIL ANALYSIS DATA --

Herd Unit 09, Study # 16, Study Name: Mosby Mountain

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Effective rooting depth (inches)	Temp °F (depth)	рН	%sand	%silt	%clay	%0M	PPM P	РРМ К	dS/m
9.29	59.2 (10.00)	6.4	50.9	28.8	20.3	4.5	27.8	316.8	1.4

Stoniness Index



PELLET GROUP FREQUENCY --Herd unit 09 , Study no: 16

Type	Quadra Freque	
	'95	'00
Rabbit	3	-
Horse	1	-
Elk	21	13
Deer	16	12
Cattle	24	7

Pellet T	ransect
Pellet Groups per Acre	Days Use per Acre (ha)
'00'	'00'
174	N/A
-	-
261	20 (50)
122	9 (22)
426	36 (88)

BROWSE CHARACTERISTICS --

Herd unit 09, Study no: 16

A	Y	Form C			Plants)					Vigor C	lace			Plants	Average	Total
	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	Per Acre	(inches) Ht. Cr.	Total
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	82 88 95 00	8 1 1	4 1 - 1	- - -	- - - 1	- - -	- - -	- 1 - 1	- - - -	- - -	1 9 1 4	3	- 1 -	- - -	266 666 20 80		10 10 4
	82 88 95 00	- 2 2	2 - 8 6	10 5 9 2	- 2 -	- - - 3	- - - 3	- - - -	- - -	-	5 21 16	11 - -	1 - -	- - -	800 333 420 320	35 3° 23 3°	7 5 4 21
	82 88 95 00	- - -	3 1	- 1 -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	- 4 1	- - -	- - -	- - -	0 266 20 0) 2 1 (
	82 88 95 00	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	0 0 80 0		0 0 4
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To	otal l	Plants/A	cre (e	xcludir	ng Dea	ad & S	leedlir	ngs)					'82 '88 '95 '00	3 5	1066 1265 460 400	Dec:	0% 21% 4% 0%

	Y R	Form C	lass (l	No. of	Plants	5)					Vigor C	lass			Plants Per Acre	Average (inches)		Total
E	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	rei Acie	Ht. Cr.		
Ar	tem	isia tride	entata	vaseya	ana													
S	82	_	_	_	_	-	-	_	-	-	_	_	_	_	0			0
	88	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	133			2 3
	95	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	60			
Ш	00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0			0
	82	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	400			6
	88	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	666			10
	95	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	120			6
\mathbf{H}	00	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11		-	_	220			11
M		34	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	4	-	-	2400		21	36
	88 95	19 11	9 41	- 16	1	-	-	-	-	-	29 68	-	-	-	1933 1360		29 21	29 68
	00	50	21	-	_	_	_	_	_	_	71	_	_	_	1420		23	71
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	00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120			6
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	Plaı	nts Show	_		derate	Use		avy Us	<u>se</u>		or Vigor					%Change		
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	Plaı	'82 '88		079 199	% % %	Use Use	00%	6 6	<u>se</u>	00	% % %				-	+19% -56%		
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% To	otal l	'82 '88 '95 '00	cre (ex	079 199 619 289	% % %		00% 00% 20% 00%	6 6 6 6	<u>se</u>	00 02 00	% % %		'88 '95		2933 3599 1600	+19% -56% +16%		28% 8%
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AY	Form C	Form Class (No. of Plants)							,	Vigor C	lass			Plants	Average	Total
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		'9	95		10%	6		309	6		00)%				-	-30%	
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